

What is claimed is :

1. A neutralizable epitope of HGF (hepatocyte growth factor) having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 32 or 33, which inhibits HGF from binding to a receptor thereof.
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2. A polynucleotide encoding the neutralizable epitope of claim 1.
3. The polynucleotide of claim 2, which has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ
10 ID NO: 34.
4. The polynucleotide of claim 2, which has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ
ID NO: 35.
- 15 5. A neutralizing antibody which specifically binds to the neutralizable epitope of claim 1.
6. The neutralizing antibody of claim 5, which is selected from the group consisting of a chimeric antibody, a monoclonal antibody and a humanized
20 antibody.
7. The neutralizing antibody of claim 5, which comprises V_H region having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 27 and V_L region having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 28.
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8. The neutralizing antibody of claim 5, which comprises V_H region having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 29 and V_L region having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 30.
- 30 9. A method for preventing or treating a disease caused by the binding of HGF to a receptor thereof comprising administering the neutralizing antibody of claim 7 to a mammal.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein the disease is liver cancer, prostate
35 cancer, colon cancer, breast cancer, brain cancer, skin cancer, malaria and Alzheimer's disease.